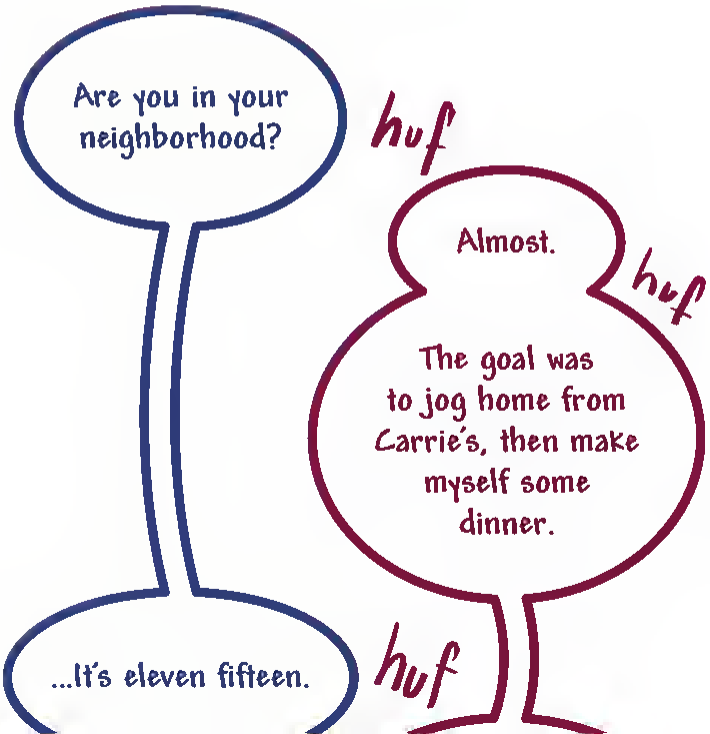
You're jogging?
Shut up, Todd. I jog!

huf huf
The fuck you do. Did you meet a hot health nut or something?
I called so you'd *entertain* me, not because I like heavy breathing at you.
huf huf

POWER BALLAD

CHAPTER ELEVEN

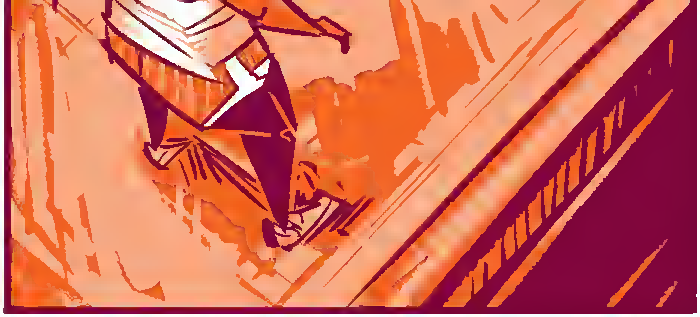


huf
huf
Well. Carina's event ran late. Also, I'm way slower than I thought I was.

AMERICAN DELI
Paradise Tanning
PALMS READ
by Pamela
Please don't get murdered in an alley.

I'll take that under advisement.
RUSTY'S GOLD
BUY · TRADE · SELL
Hey. Hey, sweetheart, c'mere.

Lemme see your phone for a second.



Shit.

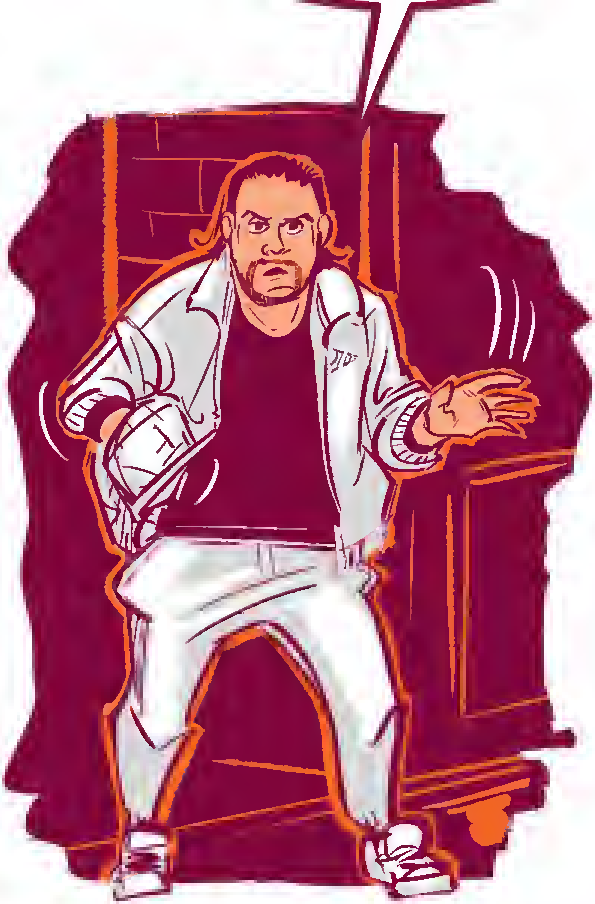
Meera?

I have to go, I'm about to be murdered in an alley.

BEEP BEEP.

Relax, bitch.
Nobody said anything
about murdering.

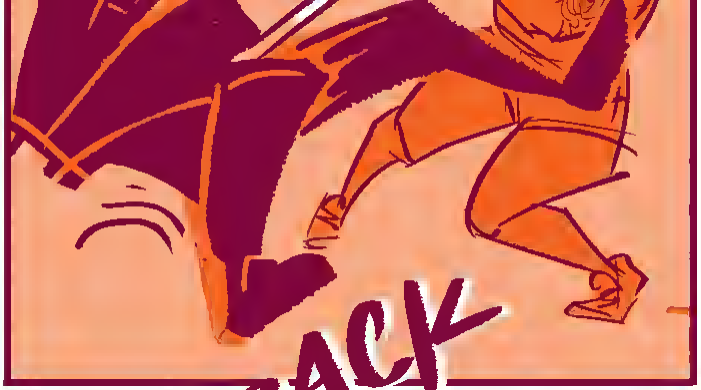
All I want's the
phone, and we're done here.
It's real simple.



Listen dude, I would—okay? I *would*.
But it's my work phone. There's trade secrets and shit on it.

I'll give you my wallet instead, okay?
Bitch, I

Then I said *give me*—
Aah!


CRACK

Fuck. Off.

Shit, man, you're fuckin' crazy!

Are you okay?
Yeah.
Good timing.
...Like, suspiciously
good timing.

Yeahhh. Jogging home from my area to yours didn't seem like a *great* idea?

I just followed to make sure you got home safely.
Sorry. So sorry.
Now that I say it out loud, I realize that's extremely creepy.

Oof!
Thanks.

NT
78
14

Also, were you seriously trying to *negotiate* with a mugger? Next time just give them the damn phone.
Hey, this is my *bat phone*.

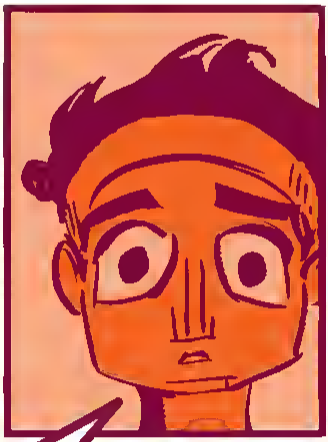
If you want the LA underworld having the skeleton's armor specs and Carina Peterson's contact list and social media passwords, *you* can give it to them.

I don't care. Your safety's more important.

Always.

Um.

Well, I take your confidentiality very seriously.



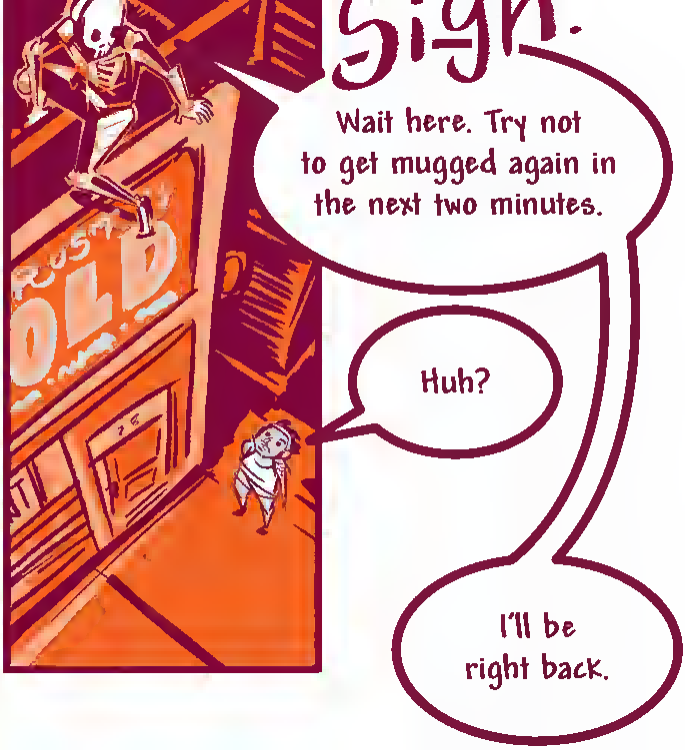
...It's really disconcerting talking to your helmet.

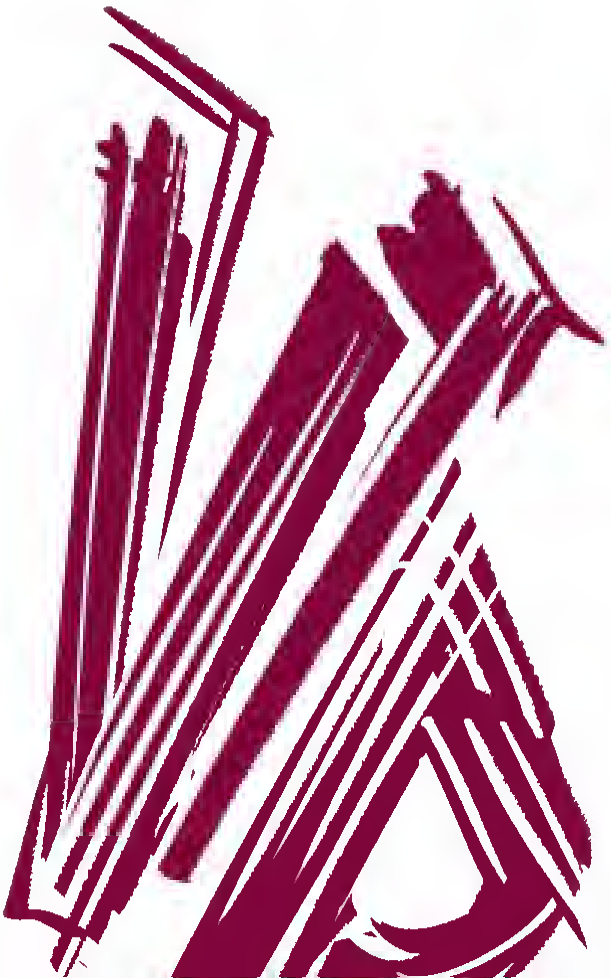
Come on, I'll follow you the rest of the way back to your place.
USTY'S
OLD
TRADE • SELL
COPY&PRINT
78

About three and a half miles.

Oh my *God*. What the *fuck* is jogging.

That's gonna take hours.


Sign.
Wait here. Try not to get mugged again in the next two minutes.
Huh?
I'll be right back.



RRRM

SKELETON SIGHTING!

EAGLE-EYED GOSSIP **@YOYOPAPA** CAUGHT A SHOT OF THE ELUSIVE VIGILANTE LATE LAST NIGHT. HE TELLS US THAT THERE WAS A MUGGER THERE EARLIER, BUT HE RAN AWAY SCREAMING BEFORE OUR CITIZEN REPORTER COULD GET A PHOTO. BUT THAT JOGGER CERTAINLY LOOKS...GRATEFUL...FOR THE ASSISTANCE ;)

@queen_lateeth

get it, skelly. **#GETITskelly**

@goasklindz

that's some kinky cosplay shit

@heartsleevesroller

whos lois lane tho

@crossfitwhiskey

just gals being pals.

@CarolineOffe

is that Mindy Kaling?

@hessterry

@CarolineOffe no it's not mindy kaling, you dumbass.

@green4fingr

uhh you run into a vigilante wanted in multiple extrajudicial assaults and you don't call the fucking cops??

@LesterScottA

here's my piece from last month on the chilling effect the skeleton's activities have had on violent crime:
thediscus.com/hsncd

@machinesaymove

the skeleton could get it.

@lawyergroupie

.....**#joggergirl** could also get it.

@blamebetty

reminder! we're keeping a crowdsourced map of skelly sightings here. please contribute accurate data if you can! **bit.ly/oy87gh**

@shiningliar

same, **#joggergirl**. same.

Okay, but I need you to acknowledge that a better friend

wouldn't have *waited an hour* to call and let me know you weren't dead in an alley.

I was freaked out! I called you as soon as I remembered to.

I can't believe you went jogging *once* and not only did a superhero swoop down to save you from violence *and* exercising, you managed to get trending in the US as "#joggergirl."

Silver lining. I'm not famous enough for anyone to recognize me from a tiny cell phone photo.

Never wearing those shorts again, though. Yikes.

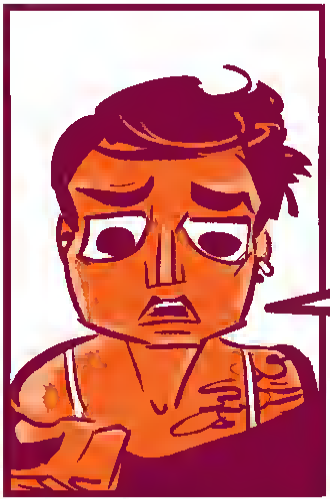
Oh shut up, your ass is fine. Probably from all that jogging.
Bite it, Todd.

Heyyy, so—
hypothetical question.
SIGHHHH
Oh Jesus,

what now?
No, it really is hypothetical!
Okay...?

Like, what if you were the skeleton.

And you saved somebody from a mugger.

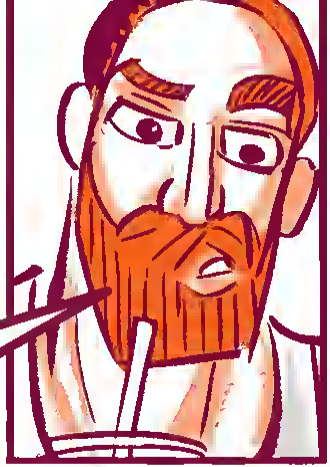


Is that, like, a *friend* thing to do?

Or like, say if it's not random superhero-ing, but like you on-purpose saved me from a mugger, because you thought I might get mugged.

Is that something you would do for a friend, or is that more of a ...*not*-so-platonic thing to do, do you think?

Slurp



Let me make sure I understand the question.

If I, hypothetically, moonlighted as a masked vigilante, and I saved you from a mugger, would it just be helping a bro out, or would it mean I wanted to bang you.

Yes.
Absolutely not.
Wait, really?
It would be morally wrong to hit on someone whose life I'd just saved.

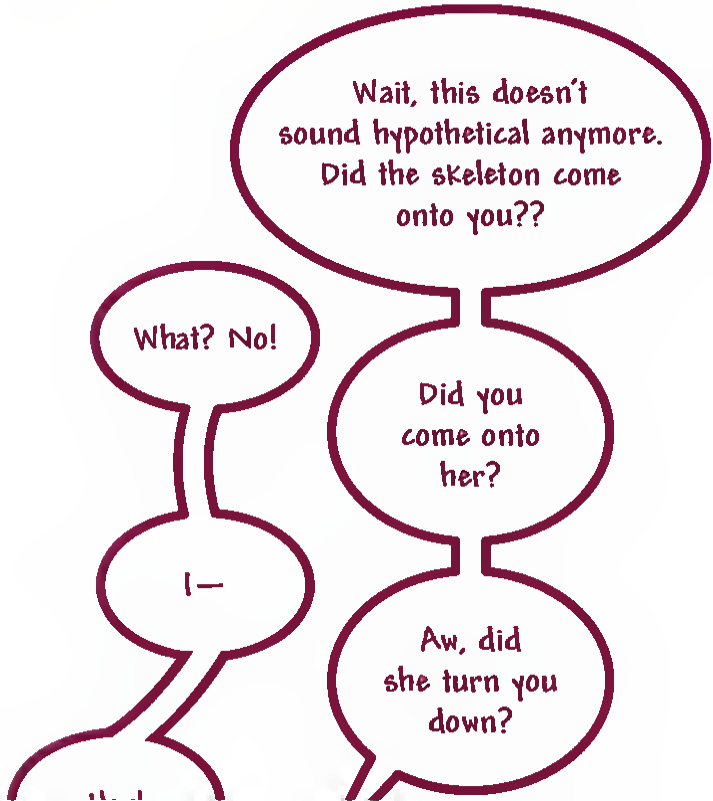
I. Don't think that's a rule?

You'd feel all vulnerable and obligated and shit. It's skeevy.

If anything, saving somebody would make me *less* likely to hit on them.

It's a weird power dynamic.

Even if you wanted to bang them before?
Did *they* want to bang *me* before, though, is the important question.


Wait, this doesn't sound hypothetical anymore. Did the skeleton come onto you??
What? No!
Did you come onto her?
I—
Aw, did she turn you down?

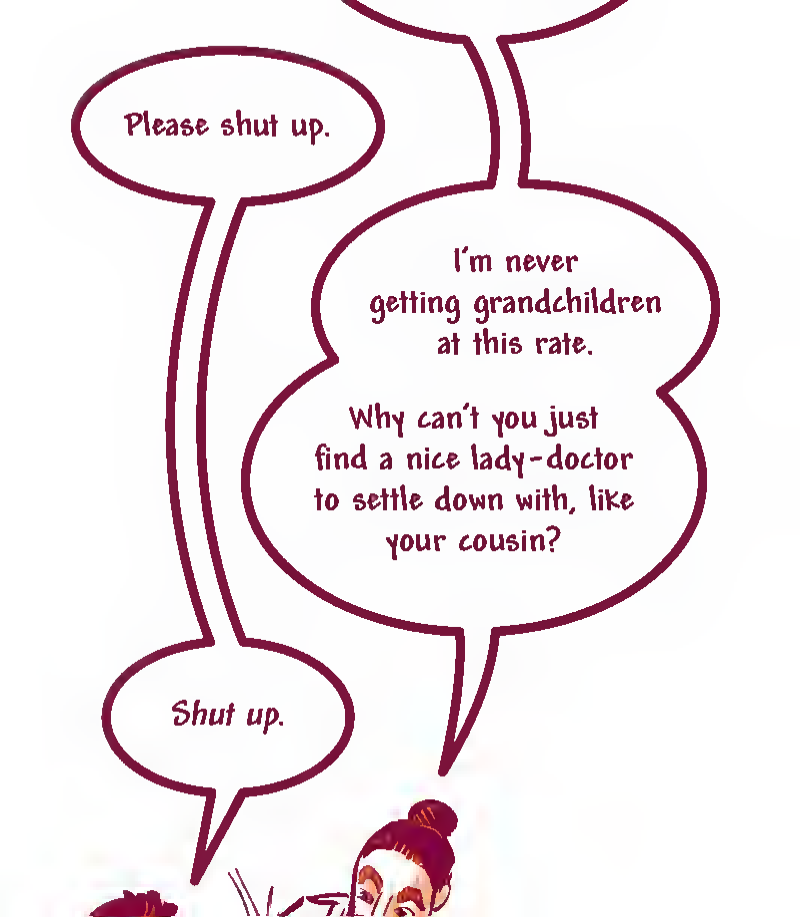
Meera, there are lots of reasons someone might not want to sleep with you, and only some of them have

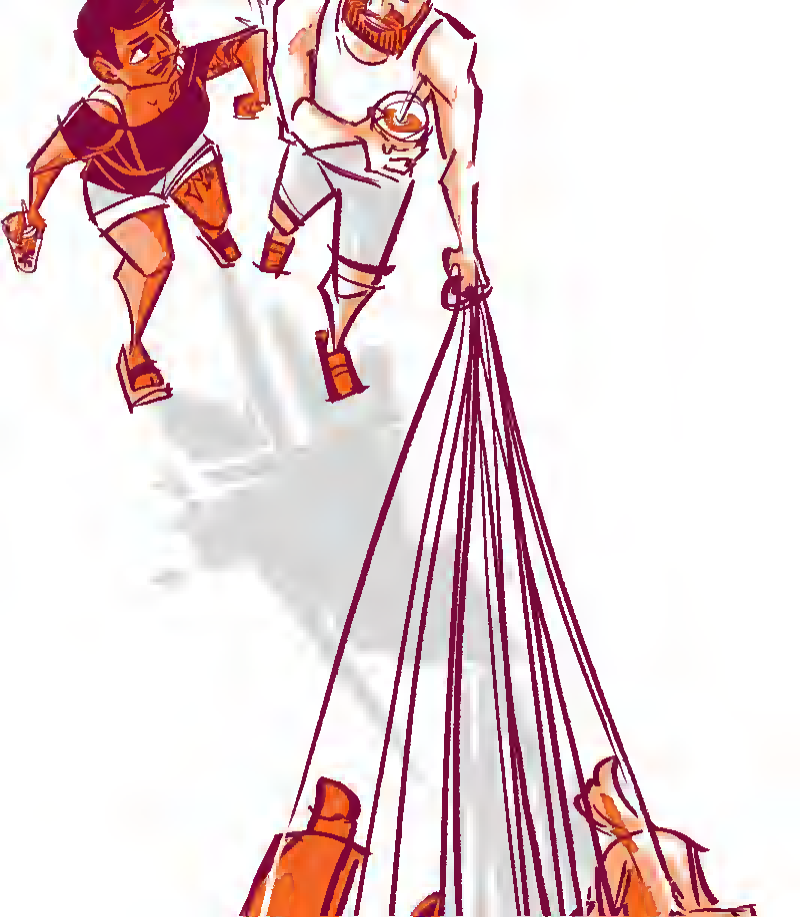
anything to do with you.

You never know what's going on with someone. Don't take it personally.

You are such an asshole.

Popstars, superheroes...you are getting *picky* in your old age.


Please shut up.
I'm never getting grandchildren at this rate.
Why can't you just find a nice lady-doctor to settle down with, like your cousin?
Shut up.



To Be Continued
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